

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

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April 6, 2004

FROM: **JAMES A. FELTEN**, Public Health Director
 Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION FOR HEPATITIS C TESTING HIGH RISK PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION: Approve submission of a grant application to the California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, in the amount of \$24,306 to participate in the Hepatitis C Testing High Risk Program for the period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2007.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: This item requests approval of the Department's grant application to the California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS (OA) in the amount of \$8,102 annually for Hepatitis C Testing High Risk Program funding for the period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2007. The Department anticipates providing 172 hepatitis C tests annually to persons at risk of acquiring this disease, as well as HIV.

OA is funding this program to demonstrate that persons at risk for acquiring HIV will access HIV antibody counseling and testing services when combined with hepatitis C testing programs. OA has allocated \$8,102 to San Bernardino County to provide this service. Additional funding for this program may be available depending on the number of eligible local health jurisdictions which respond to the offer from OA.

The Department of Public Health has been providing HIV antibody counseling and testing to the residents of San Bernardino County since 1985. This service includes an explanation of the test procedure including the accuracy and reliability of results; interpretation of the significance of the results including the development of symptomatic HIV disease or an AIDS defining illness; description of the benefits of testing and enrollment in early intervention programs; review of the laws pertaining to discrimination against persons living with HIV; documentation of selected demographic variables and risk assessment; provision of information on HIV transmission, prevention, and client-centered strategies for behavior change; collection of a laboratory specimen; distribution of condoms and educational materials; and referrals as indicated.

San Bernardino County has been providing outreach to persons at risk since it first received prevention education funding in 1987. More than 1,000 persons receive outreach services annually. The Neighborhood Intervention Geared to High Risk Testing (NIGHT) Program has been in operation since 1999. NIGHT utilizes a mobile testing unit to provide HIV antibody

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GRANT APPLICATION FOR INJECTION DRUG USER HIV TESTING UTILIZING HEPATITIS C TESTING HIGH RISK PROGRAM

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counseling and testing and to make referrals for those at greatest risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. In fiscal year 2002-03, San Bernardino County provided HIV prevention outreach services to 9,760 persons.

San Bernardino County was one of nine jurisdictions in California to be awarded a grant to provide Hepatitis C Prevention and Control Projects. Hepatitis C testing was integrated into the existing HIV antibody counseling and testing and NIGHT programs. During the funding cycle, February 1, 2002 – March 31, 2003, 418 hepatitis C tests were performed. Two hundred fifty persons with histories of risky behavior were offered hepatitis C testing under this project. Of the 418 persons screened, 111 (27%) were found to be infected with the hepatitis C virus.

OA has stipulated that \$6,887 of the \$8,102 be used to purchase hepatitis C test kits. The remaining funds (\$1,215) will be used to support 3% of a Health Services Assistant I for collecting serologic specimens. Should this proposal be funded, the Department will return to the Board of Supervisors to accept the grant award.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY OTHERS: This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Scott Runyan, Deputy County Counsel, (909) 387-9022) on March 29, 2004. This item has also been reviewed and approved by the County Administrative Office (Carol Hughes, Administrative Analyst, (909) 388-0211) on March 26, 2004.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approval of this application requires no local County cost.

COST REDUCTION REVIEW: The County Administrative Office has reviewed this agenda item and recommends approval as it results in no local cost to the County.

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT(S): All

PRESENTER: James A. Felten, Public Health Director, (909) 387-9146

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